

THE ACADEMY

WITH WHICH ARE INCORPORATED LITERATURE AND THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by CECIL COWPER, Esq., J.P., Barrister-at-Law

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CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Review of the Week . . .	123	Reviews:—	
Dawn	125	Our South-Western Shores	131
Statecraft or Talk? . . .	125	Fiction	132
The Case of Archer Shee .	126	The Theatre	134
Some Poets of the Victorian		Music of the Year	135
Era.—III.	127	Luck and Amulets.—I. . .	136
A Turned Page of History.	129	Dressing Up	136
The Japanese Woman . .	130	Dog-Days	137
		Correspondence	138
		Books Received	138

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REVIEW OF THE WEEK

SOME very curious figures have come to light with reference to the progressive cost of the Civil administration of the country since the Government has been in power. There is no desire to attribute special blame to the present occupants of the Treasury Bench. The important point to bear in mind is that acquiescence in demands put forward by Socialists in a hurry must be weighed in the balance of practicability. Every well-intentioned man or woman would like to be the author of the millennium, not for purposes of advertisement, but out of good nature and good-will, of which there is an abundant stock in the nation. Unfortunately there exist two great obstacles to prudent advance along the lines of social reform. One is waste of public resources in valueless schemes, the other is foolish fidelity to an obsolete fiscal system. An instance of the first vice can be pointed to in the recklessly wasteful expenditure arising out of the Chancellor's Land Valuation scheme. Beyond providing employment for a large army of the unemployed at great cost to the national exchequer, the operation cannot be of the smallest utility to anyone. The experiment is, of course, truly Socialistic in its essence, since the Government reduces the ranks of the unemployed by providing a certain number with unproductive labour. The second obstacle to advance along the line of social reform lies in the refusal to adopt the only commercial policy which can possibly provide the necessary means for carrying it through. If the Socialists—we mean the honest Socialists—were not a very purblind section of the community, they would realise that by attaching themselves to the Radical party they are creating the most effectual obstacles in the path which they wish to traverse. Economy of administration is a heresy which no one can reasonably impute to the present Government, and sound fiscal policy can alone produce the revenue which is the essential basis of social reform on any considerable scale, unless, indeed, social reformers are prepared to view with equanimity a headlong rush into national bankruptcy.

The House of Commons has adjourned until November 15, unloved, unhonoured, and unsung. The session has been a profitless one, and no Bill of any real importance or merit has become law. We are just as far off the solution of those great social problems, of which we hear so much on Radical platforms, as ever we were, and we are just as far off the solution of the Constitutional crisis. Until this latter all-important matter is finally settled there is little hope that the country will benefit by the labours of its legislators. We deal in another place with the general contempt and disrepute into which the House of Commons has sunk during the last few years, and with the futility and poor character of the debates. The present Session has been productive of few useful measures owing to the demise of the Crown and the necessity of giving the new Monarch time to handle the reins before asking him to drive round dangerous corners. This brings us to the subject of the mysterious Conference of which we know so little. Mr. Asquith made his promised statement on Friday last in the following terms, which leaves us just as much in the dark as ever we were, except for the fact that we now know for certain the number of times that the Conference has met:—

The representatives of the Government and the Opposition have held twelve meetings, and have carefully surveyed a large part of the field of controversy. The result is that our discussions have made such progress—although we have not so far reached an agreement—as to render it, in the opinion of all of us, not only desirable but necessary that they should continue. In fact, I may go further and say that we should think it wrong at this stage to break them off. There is no question of their indefinite continuance, and if we find, as the result of our further deliberations during the recess, that there is no prospect of an agreement that can be announced to Parliament in the course of the present Session, we shall bring the Conference to a close.

We still maintain that the Conference is bound to break up without arriving at an understanding, and, even supposing that an agreement is reached, it will not be acceptable to the rank and file of either party.

There is something rather humorous in Mr. Asquith's announcement to the House and in the smiles of benevolent approval with which it was greeted by the other Members of the Round Table. We can almost see the Conference spending its twelfth session, not in the discussion of the Constitutional crisis, but in drafting a statement which would keep the obstreperous spirits of both sides in repose during the holidays. We gather from Mr. Asquith's statement that the Conference is going to continue its labours during the recess. We quite fail to see how this is to be done. Its eight members, in search of rest and fresh air will be widely separated. One may be yachting, another playing golf, a third on his grouse moor, a fourth travelling abroad. How, then, are they going to meet and settle these momentous questions? Will the eight, or a suitable quorum, meet at lunch on the grouse moor or amid the turnips, and there between the drives devote odd minutes to the discussion of the Veto; or will they adjourn to some country house and over the wine and walnuts or across the bridge-table settle the future of their country? Or will there be occasional gatherings in London after hasty midnight journeys, where each member, disgusted at the break in his holiday, will do his best to meet his old opponent halfway, and so.

quickly terminate the whole affair? Of one thing we are certain. If the Conference does meet during the recess it will do so in a far more benevolent and conciliatory spirit than during the Session. There will be no troublesome followers listening at every keyhole; there will be none of the stress of party strife or of late hours in a close atmosphere, and it is probable that these factors may lead to good results; but we fear not. At any rate, whatever the future holds in store, Mr. Asquith's announcement was an excellent device for insuring the continuance of the armed truce, so that the leaders might enjoy a peaceful holiday.

The new attitude of Labour which has manifested itself in the recent railway cessation and in the threatened lock-out by the master shipbuilders in the North, in consequence of breach of the agreement of 1908 by the men, suggests that the trades unions are losing their authority over their members. A result such as this would have a very far-reaching effect on labour problems of the day. It would be folly to pretend that the unions have always used the power delegated to them wisely, justly, or prudently. It must be acknowledged that in many cases their action has been tyrannical, and in many cases it has not conduced to the advantage of the members. So much being granted, it is nevertheless apparent that a serious situation arises, if in the present days of organised labour a spirit of insubordination towards their own representative bodies is indulged in by those who nominally belong to the unions. The whole case for the sanction of conciliation would appear to go by the board. If bodies of individuals can repudiate when they please the action of their plenipotentiaries, can tear up agreements and refuse to be bound by awards, it is clear that it is nugatory to have recourse to arbitration and conciliation. This spirit has recently been observed in the case of the strike on the North-Eastern Railway, and again in the separatist action of the men belonging to the Boilermakers' and Shipwrights' Societies employed at the Meadows Shipyard at Partick. In the first case, the union asserted its authority with difficulty and after delay; in the latter case the societies have been practically defied for nearly a week past. The lesson is that, once Socialistic and revolutionary ideas are engendered, it is useless to cry halt in this direction and in that. The disaffection to authority which has been sedulously engendered, is disaffection to authority in all shapes and forms. Those who have sown the seed will reap the whirlwind, whether they be labour leaders or others.

Ratepayers are becoming more and more nervous as the full effect of the decision in the "Crown and Shuttle" case becomes fully apparent. The burden on the rates when the rating authority has given the relief which it is obligatory to give in respect of the increased licence duties will be little short of disastrous. Local improvements will have to be shelved or abandoned, the security of the rates will be diminished, the appointment of valuers to prepare special lists for licensed premises will involve much cost, and, generally speaking, local finance will be thrown entirely out of gear. In many districts property can only now be let, and livings can only be earned, because of the comparatively low rates which obtain. Directly the rates are enhanced the margin of livelihood disappears; local employment is checked, and the sum

of local poverty is augmented. Such is the result of haphazard and vindictive legislation by a party which is always posing as the poor man's friend; which has produced the poor man's Budget, out of which arises the chaos and oppression to which we have referred. It has been calculated that the reductions in rates which will have to be allowed on licensed premises in the United Kingdom will approach four million pounds. Ratepayers who are not licence-holders will have to make up this sum. What is this operation other than feeding the Treasury from the rates? A masterpiece of indirect taxation perpetrated by those who profess that indirect taxation is to them anathema. The times, indeed, are out of joint, and nothing but scientific government will prevent the nation's affairs from drifting into—

"Ruin upon ruin, rout on rout—
Confusion worse confounded."

The news from the Indian frontier is not very satisfactory, and we are faced with the possible contingency of another expedition to Tibet. A small force of troops, with sappers and pioneers, is assembling at Sinigori, at the base of the Darjiling Hills, ready to move across the frontier to protect or to succour our advanced posts in Tibet should they be suddenly attacked. Of these there are three: The most forward is that at Gyangtse Yong, where we have a Trade Agent and a detachment of fifty Native Infantry; at Phari Yong there is a small detachment of telegraphists; and at Yatung a Trade Agent. It is to be hoped, however, that no active operations will be necessary, and that a peaceful solution will be found. The politics of Tibet are rather difficult for the man in the street to follow. We thought the relations between India and Tibet had been definitely and satisfactorily settled by the Treaty of 1904, but apparently we left out of our calculations the awakening of China and the prominent, almost aggressive, rôle she has since set herself to play. Tibet has been nominally for many centuries under the suzerainty of the Celestial Empire, but until the last six years China has taken so little interest in her protégé that the latter has become practically an independent country. The entire situation changed with the British Expedition of 1904, which aroused the suspicions and mistrust of the Chinese Government, whose traditional policy has been to keep Tibet a closed country.

When the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal head of the State, visited Pekin last he was received with regal splendour, but this outward show of friendship was but a blind to conceal the ambition of the Chinese Government to play a more active rôle in Lhasa as a set-off to British influence. This policy became manifest on the return of the Dalai Lama to his capital, and when he and his Minister showed a disposition to resist Chinese encroachments, Pekin sent soldiers to arrest him and his Ministers. Lhasa was occupied after much fighting and bloodshed, and the Dalai Lama fled for protection to India, where he is now in residence at Darjiling, watching the situation in the capital, and ready to return should events take a propitious turn. Meanwhile the occupation of the capital by a Chinese army, variously estimated as numbering from 3,000 to 24,000 men, has aroused the fierce opposition of the Tibetans, who have appealed to both Russia and Great Britain to assist them. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to understand why the

Tibetans threaten an attack on our advanced posts, and the idea is ridiculed by the Tibetan traders who have recently crossed the frontier. On the other hand, the Chinese declare that the Tibetans are so angry at our failure to protect them against the encroachments of China that they are ready to attack our posts at any moment. This would indeed be a curious policy even for an Oriental. It seems to us that the object of China is to stir up trouble between India and Tibet so as to advance her own interests and make her occupation of Lhasa permanent. If this be true, the situation is serious, for it opens up afresh the whole problem of our relations with Pekin, and brings the eternal Far Eastern question prominently to the front in a new form.

According to the *Times* correspondent at Washington, a movement has been started by a number of influential Americans to celebrate in a becoming manner the centenary of peace between this country and the United States, which falls due in 1914, one hundred years after the signature of the Treaty of Ghent. We hope that a strong committee will be formed on this side to co-operate with the American representatives, and thus ensure a befitting celebration. Such a centenary should be observed not only by the two nations directly involved, but by the entire civilised world, for this protracted period of peace has made for the prosperity of all nations. Every European Power has contributed towards the population of the Western Empire, and although the United States to-day is looked upon as one of the great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race, a very large portion of its population and a very large number of its most distinguished citizens derive their origin from the French, Latin, Dutch, and Germanic stock. The bare idea of a war between the two English-speaking nations now seems absurd, but it must not be forgotten that several times during the last century the two nations were brought to the verge of hostilities.

The year 1914 will be the most becoming date to commemorate the moderation and wisdom of the statesmen of both countries who guided their respective nations successfully through these periods of storm. Now no cloud can be seen in the sky of a peaceful future, for almost all the former subjects of controversy have been removed by mutual agreement or by arbitration. The present century will probably see an even closer union of the two branches of the Anglo-Saxon race, and this more than any other factor will help to preserve the peace of the world. Both have a common mission to perform. Both are the guardians of peoples who are dependent for their prosperity and for their happiness on the maintenance of the strong arm of the Anglo-Saxon law and order. President Roosevelt set an example which, although it caused no little sensation at the time, may well be followed by others in the future. He did not hesitate to advise us as to our Imperial duties and responsibilities in his now famous Guildhall speech. This is the first instance of a statesman on a visit to a neighbouring State as an honoured guest who has intervened directly in its politics. At first sight it may seem a dangerous and undesirable precedent; but if we look deeper, its significance is obvious. It is a great step towards breaking down those artificial barriers between the nations, and the realisation of the ideal of mankind as an organic whole with common interests and a united future.

DAWN

Dull in the white dawn's tears
Loomed fields and hills and trees;
Cold, with a heart of fears,
I gazed, and mourned with these. . . .
I heard a step . . . 'twas Spring had passed,
And at my feet a flower had cast
That shook in the wild, wet breeze.

"Foam of the storm, sweet bloom!
A waif on life's wide sea,"
I mused; "thy end, the tomb;
My sad heart aches with thee." . . .
I heard a song . . . 'twas Love; she kissed
The flower, and at her voice the mist
Lifted from lane and lea.

Each hill's breast shone with gold,
The fields with daisies spread;
The trees grew bright, with bold
Green hoods to grace each head;
I heard a laugh . . . 'twas Death, to claim
Love and the flower. I breathed his name,
And all the land lay dead. W. L. R.

STATECRAFT OR TALK?

THE deterioration which men of even middle age are bound to observe in the character, serious purpose, and efficiency of the House of Commons as a legislative machine must eventually, and perhaps soon, bring to the front a problem of exceeding gravity. There can be no question that the government of the country does not run in the lines which it should. We do not now refer so much to the vulgar vices of a popular system: the posing for applause, the flaunting of dangerous departures from political principle as barter for support in the division lobby—all the familiar arts of the cheap-jack who in times of yore was only to be looked for in the New Cut or at country fairs. These arts translated into the sphere of government are sufficiently revolting, entirely degrading, and have a tendency full of evil. Demoralisation is the path to disaster, and therefore any system which tends to political demoralisation is full of peril to the commonwealth.

In the days of oratory, the time occupied in discussion was not entirely wasted. The burning sentences, inspired by conviction and directed to noble aim, served to elevate national ideals and national character. The fact that the orator alone held audience of the nation confined the flow of language within somewhat narrow limits. The orator would not speak unless he had a theme worthy of his eloquence, and unless he had given time and thought to its treatment in a manner conducive to his reputation and suited to the taste of a critical audience. Ordinary babble met with no recognition, and there was therefore no inducement to produce it.

The scene is changed. The dignity and rhythm of pristine oratory has yielded to the modern craze for advertisement. However slovenly in form, however uninstructed in material, what is called a speech must be belched forth as often as possible. It is known that the oratorical garbage will be edited and polished up by those portions of the Press which are endowed with superior literary taste; and even if this is not done the fare may entirely suit the palate of those for whom it is served up. The elector stands awed by the circumstance that his man has spoken in the forum of the nation. He does not inquire and is not informed whether the orator's rising was the signal for precipitate flight from the debating arena of all excepting the luckless Speaker, the unhappy clerks, and the long-suffering reporters.

These pitiful exhibitions might not excite any feeling other than amusement were it not that they prejudicially

affect legislation and administration. Ministers are only human, and there is a limit to their powers of endurance. Endless and wearisome debate, especially debate which is devoid of all ornament, whether of elegance or legitimate passion, must impair the capacity of Ministers for adequate reflection and for well-balanced administration. Enforced and lengthened attendance in the House of Commons under the conditions referred to must bring in its train loss of efficiency in legislative construction. To draft a Bill for presentation to Parliament is an arduous undertaking, although to the skilled practitioner it is only a mechanical exercise. The statesman who is the author of an important measure, bearing on all the complex interests and balanced conditions which are the outcome of centuries, has a constructive task which cannot be carried through in the midst of an atmosphere of turmoil, over-pressure, and nerve-strain. Many failures in the domain of legislation may be traced to work accomplished under such conditions, relieved only by the excitement and injurious incidents of elections. It behoves a common-sense people to realise truths such as these, and to demand a saner system for their government.

The Conference, which is often derided, may contain the germ of some such procedure. There are at least some matters of National and Imperial moment which need not and ought not to be dealt with from the point of view of party or personal advantage. The defence of the country and the Empire; the education of the children whose heritage in the near future the Empire will be; the national finances on which the maintenance of the Empire and all that it means depends, ought to be tasks for statesmen, and should not be marred by "the hare-brained chatter of irresponsible frivolity."

THE CASE OF ARCHER-SHEE

ON Friday last, after a trial extending over four days, the Solicitor-General, on behalf of the Admiralty, withdrew without reserve the charges against the cadet George Archer-Shee of stealing a postal order of the value of 5s. and forging the endorsement thereto. Thus, after seeking vindication in vain for two years, the boy, who is only fifteen years of age, leaves the Court without a stain on his character, although in all probability he must abandon the Navy as a career and seek some other profession. We heartily congratulate the boy and his father on the establishment of his innocence, which is largely due to the splendid advocacy and devotion of Sir Edward Carson. But the case cannot be allowed to rest here. The facts disclose such a deplorable state of affairs that, until parents have some assurance that the heartless procedure adopted by the Admiralty towards the boy will never be repeated, they can hardly be blamed if they choose some other profession than the Navy for their sons. The trial which has so happily ended disclosed methods of conducting judicial inquiries such as one is accustomed to associate with the Inquisition or with the Court of the Star Chamber—with everything, in fact, which we are accustomed to regard as thoroughly un-English, and which we loathe and abhor. The whole story irresistibly recalls the scandal of the Dreyfus case on a smaller scale. Inestimable good has resulted to France and to the French Army from the exposure of the canker which was eating into the vitals of the nation and causing the Army to drift apart from the Republic. Let us hope that in the present instance we shall also benefit by the very unpleasantness of the exposure.

Briefly let us state the facts. In 1908 the boy's father made an agreement with the Admiralty, entering his son at the Royal Naval College, Osborne. He paid certain fees on certain conditions, one of which was to withdraw his son if his conduct proved unsatisfactory. In September, 1908, the boy came home for his holidays, returning at their termination. On October 18 the suppliant received the following letter from the Admiralty:—

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to inform you that they have received a letter from the commanding officer of the Royal Naval College at Osborne, reporting the theft of a postal order at the college on the 7th inst., which was afterwards cashed at the post office. Investigation of the circumstances of the case leaves no other conclusion possible than that the postal order was taken by your son, Cadet George Archer-Shee. My Lords deeply regret that they must therefore request you to withdraw your son from the college.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. J. THOMAS.

By this letter a young cadet of thirteen was branded as a thief and a forger, although at the investigation which led to this disastrous result neither the father nor any friend of the boy was present to hear what was said. The Admiralty refused to allow the suppliant to see the letter from Captain Cotton on which they acted, and when he went to Osborne and asked to see the evidence he was met with the rejoinder, "We can give you no information, but refer you to the Lords of the Admiralty." Under the circumstances, he took the boy away. After much correspondence between his solicitors (Messrs. Lewis and Lewis) and the Admiralty, the latter replied offering to show the postal order for 5s., and stating that they had not acted solely on documentary evidence. Eventually, on November 4, the Admiralty sent a letter, with a copy of certain documents and reports of witnesses. It contained also the report of Mr. Gurrin, the handwriting expert, who stated that the endorsement on the back of the postal order was in Archer-Shee's handwriting. Subsequently there was a further enquiry before Mr. R. D. Acland, Judge-Advocate of the Fleet. The father asked to be represented at this, but the Admiralty replied that the enquiry was not one in which "representation on your side in the sense in which you use the word would be appropriate."

Thus for two years all the efforts of the father to vindicate his son's innocence in open court by a judicial enquiry were opposed by the Admiralty, and the boy stood branded as a thief and a forger by the accusation of a Departmental Tribunal. This is no place to review the evidence on which George Archer-Shee was convicted, but we commend a careful perusal of it to every parent with a son in the Army or Navy whose career is liable to be closed by a similar procedure. In the first place, the charge was improbable almost to the point of absurdity. The bare idea of a healthy-minded English boy, with an excellent character, who had over £6 in the Savings Bank which he could withdraw at any time, risking his honour and his career for the paltry sum of 5s. should have awakened the scepticism of his judges. The evidence itself was not sufficient to have hung the proverbial dog, and rested simply on the statement of the postmistress (Miss Tucker) that the cadet who cashed a postal order for 15s. 6d.—admittedly the accused—was the same as the one who cashed the stolen order for 5s. Yet when she was asked to identify the cadet who cashed the orders from among seven others she entirely failed to do so, which at once rendered her evidence valueless. Then another interesting fact was disclosed at the trial—namely, that several thefts had occurred at the College before Archer-Shee's arrival, and that many took place after he had left. Surely this fact alone should have influenced the Admiralty in allowing a judicial enquiry into the whole affair.

But this is not the most serious aspect of the case. Every tribunal, whether secret or not, is liable to make mistakes, and the innocent must suffer from time to time. But in this instance the Admiralty were in possession of facts of paramount and decisive import to establish Archer-Shee's innocence. Yet for two years they allowed him to remain branded as a thief and a forger. It is not due to any sudden pangs of remorse or to an innate love of justice on the part of the Lords of the Admiralty that Archer-Shee owes his vindication to-day. The Department have thrown every obstacle in the way of an impartial enquiry, and have opposed it in open Court. The only means by which

the father could obtain redress was by the cumbersome and roundabout procedure known as a Petition of Right, as no action can lie against the King in open Court. The father had to sue the servants of the Crown for breach of contract, and the Petition had to be endorsed by his Majesty with the words, "Let right be done," before any action could lie. Even at the trial before Mr. Justice Phillimore the Admiralty tried their best to prove the boy guilty, but they were beaten in open Court and driven into such a corner that in order to save themselves they gave way before the end and withdrew their ridiculous charges. Herein lies the true significance and the real seriousness of the whole affair. No fresh evidence was produced at the trial, and no fresh witnesses were called for either side, except those as to character for the defence. Therefore the Admiralty cannot say: "We thought we were in the right, and that the evidence against the cadet warranted our drastic action; but in view of what has come to light since we admit that we were wrong, and are only too pleased to withdraw our charges." There was no fresh evidence; there was merely the searching cross-examination and ruthless exposure of the whole absurd assumption by England's most able advocate, against which even the skill of Sir Rufus Isaacs could not contend. Therefore, had there been, in the first instance, the judicial enquiry which the father demanded, the boy would have been represented by counsel, and his innocence would have long since been vindicated.

A great deal more lies behind the case of Archer-Shee than the actual vindication of the boy. The whole system of departmental enquiries and secret reports is on trial, and the issue is fraught with momentous consequences to every Englishman who adopts the Army or the Navy as his career. The recent development of the system throughout all branches of the service is not only alarming, but it is making it increasingly difficult to obtain suitable officers. No man likes to adopt a profession where he has no security of tenure. Yet this is the position of an officer holding a commission in the Army. He may work hard at his profession, he may improve his professional knowledge by extra courses and private study, and then, should he happen to incur the disfavour of his commanding officer, his hopes of future promotion may be blasted without his knowledge by unfavourable reports which year after year may be sent to the War Office and there pigeon-holed, only to be brought up against him years later when the Department is called upon to consider the question of his fitness for promotion. Thus at an early age any officer is liable to find his career ruined and himself cast on the world to seek some other profession. He has no remedy, and is kept in the dark as to the reasons which have caused him to be passed over or asked to resign. We believe that the majority of commanding officers are high-minded men, who exercise this critical responsibility of making confidential reports with the utmost discretion and care; nevertheless, mistakes must sometimes occur, and their judgment must sometimes be at fault. In every civilian walk of life the victim has a remedy at law for wrongful dismissal, but in the King's service he has none. There is no redress, no Court of Appeal, no higher and impartial tribunal to which he can appeal. A department has no heart, as has been well proved in the case of George Archer-Shee. It abides by certain cast-iron rules, and places every obstacle in the way of the innocent seeking vindication. It matters not if the innocent suffer, so long as so-called privileges remain inviolate. We fully realise that there are great difficulties in the way of an equitable solution, but can discipline only be maintained in the King's service by methods and procedure which would never be tolerated in civilian life? As Sir Edward Carson so eloquently pointed out, the street arab, if arrested and charged with theft, can take his case right up to the Court of Appeal, whilst the young officer entering the service of his country at a tender age may remain for two years under the stigma of a baseless charge. There is obviously something wrong here. We live in an enlightened age. In no period of the world's history have

individual rights and liberty been so safeguarded as now. Let us have done for ever with these secret departmental tribunals in which the accused is not heard, and let the soldier and the sailor stand on a footing of equality with his civilian brother. We want to popularise the Service, not to arouse suspicion against it. We cannot afford, in these days of mighty armaments, to make the youth of the nation who are willing to face their enemies bravely in the field afraid of the consequences of adopting an honourable career so necessary to the Empire.

SOME POETS OF THE VICTORIAN ERA

III.—ROBERT BROWNING.

We do not all paint pictures, we do not all compose music, but every one of us uses the poet's medium—words; therefore poetry, when it has humanity enough to touch us closely, often takes possession of us and becomes part of our life. A vast proportion of the verse published at the present day (at the author's expense, it is to be feared) lacks this humanity. It has for its justification nothing but rhyme and rhythm—a scaffolding, sometimes shaky enough, upon which is carefully erected a fine building of platitudes. As well might we call Euclid's elements or Todhunter's Algebra poetry as dignify these neat and spacious verses by the honoured name. To appeal to our heart, and at the same time to satisfy our intellect, something more than elegance and artistic phrasing, more than purity of diction and correctness of construction, is required, and that essential quality, for want of a better word, we call humanity. Different poets express it in different ways. Wordsworth obtained it by communion with nature, by drawing analogies between his soul and his actual surroundings; Browning obtained it by an insatiable, inquisitorial interest in his fellow-man.

Never was a poet so restless to probe the souls of his heroes and heroines—and to find good in them—as Robert Browning. Even in the character of the corrupt Guido ("The Ring and the Book," x.) a gleam of hope flashes; the illustration of his degraded mind is very telling:

I stood at Naples once, a night so dark
I could have scarce conjectured there was earth
Anywhere, sky or sea or world at all;
But the night's black was burst through by a blaze—
Thunder struck blow on blow, earth groaned and tore
Through her whole length of mountain visible;
There lay the city thick and plain with spires,
And, like a ghost dis-shrouded, white the sea.
So may the truth be flashed out by one blow,
And Guido see, one instant, and be saved.

The reading of the poems of Shelley and Keats, in his fourteenth year, set Browning's genius on fire, but he went as far from Shelley's outlook, from Keats' pure, intrinsic beauty, as a man well could while remaining a poet. He was intensely human, intensely eager to arrive at motive and thought and the springs of action; his lines seem at times almost to gesticulate as he sets down in a kind of divine hurry the ideas that throng through his brain. What other poet could begin a set of verses like this?

Gr-r-r—there go, my heart's abhorrence!
Water your damned flower-pots, do!
If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
God's blood, would not mine kill you!

We are not defending this extreme instance, which is less a poem than a rude tirade; we give it merely for the sake of its suggestion of the clenched fist, the uplifted arm.

It was this radical humanity of his that led Browning often to seize on the most delightfully incongruous and personal details and use them as metaphors, or bind them into a poem—things that would seem absurd and often trivial in the extreme, were they not informed with vitality.

by inimitable skill. The apothecary's bottles, the chemist's mortar, the "blue spurt of a lighted match," the "wick in the socket"—a hundred little everyday matters are burned into his song. Glance at *Porphyria*, sheltering from the stormy night:

... She rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sate down by my side
And called me.

Soiled gloves, a wet cloak and shawl, in a love poem! Yet it strikes no discordant note. Take, again, this swift etching from "*A Lover's Quarrel*":

See, how she looks now, dressed
In a sledging-cap and vest!
'Tis a huge fur cloak—
Like a reindeer's yoke
Falls the lappet along the breast;
Sleeves for her arms to rest,
Or to hang, as my Love likes best.

It gives the very spirit of a keen winter's day, and in these quick sketches—a twirl of the brush, and 'tis done—Browning has hardly an equal.

So far, all the poems we have alluded to are perfectly straightforward and comprehensible; but it is impossible to discuss Browning's work, even in the limits of a brief article, without devoting some attention to its difficulties for the earnest student. Enough has been written on the "obscurity" of Browning to bewilder thoroughly the senses of everybody who ventures to wander without a guide over the dangerous pack-ice of criticism. If we approach a poem expecting to find it enigmatical, warned off its rocky coast by the doleful foghorns of various well-intentioned commentators, we are apt, if we dare it, to discover either half-a-dozen meanings in it which never entered the poet's head, or no meaning at all; and in each case our profit is insignificant in proportion to the labour we have expended. Intelligent reading of a writer such as Browning presupposes an attitude and an equipment of mind very different from that necessary to consider Wordsworth or Tennyson. The stranger, taking up either of these last two poets for a preliminary hour, is able to grasp practically at once the beauty of the theme of the particular poem he selects; but with Browning he had better remember two or three peculiarities. One of these is, that in his prodigious hurry to set down the crowding thoughts Browning exhibited very little reverence for the rules of grammar or syntax; if it assisted his scansion or accelerated the development of his subject to omit a preposition, a pronoun, or even a verb, those parts of speech were ignominiously discarded, and the unfortunate reader was left to grope his way through a cavernous sentence, or to force a path through a hedge of prickly phrases, lucky if he escaped with a headache. Obscurity of thought, however, and obscurity of composition, are two different things which may easily be confused; the poet's thoughts were clear enough, if only he had not crushed them into a mould which was sometimes too small for them.

With Browning, perhaps more frequently than with any other poet, it is essential to "get inside" the poem in order thoroughly to comprehend its beauty and its meaning. Too often the reader of Browning resembles one who watches a dance with ears closed to the music; he can see the movement, smile at the gestures, appreciate some of the delight, but the sweet controlling strains are to him inaudible. It is of no use to approach Browning idly or with dulled attention—for him every sense must be on the alert; remembering this, we can explain the vogue a few years ago of "Browning societies" and "circles." He projects into many readers a magnificent curiosity; they are conscious that although they have read a poem

they have missed half of its significance. By comparing notes, therefore, with others who also feel the need of added light, and by reading aloud—giving here a new emphasis, there a fresh fervour—they arrive at a finer conception of the poet than would be possible in solitude.

At the risk of repetition we must again protest that this difficulty is not downright obscurity. Because the poet's modulations are unusual and daring, because he sometimes gives us, as we might put it, forbidden consecutive fourths and fifths in the harmonies of language, it does not follow that his music is incomprehensible. It is complex, if you like. The difficulty of a master is often but the incompetence of his pupils. To hear the groans of some poor folk whose mental fare never ought to include anything stronger than the poetry of Mrs. Hemans, we could almost echo the words of Swift when he asserted that "not one gentleman's daughter in a thousand has been brought to read or understand her native tongue."

It must be admitted, however, that there are times when no pleading can exonerate Browning from the charge of a complexity that degenerates into real obscurity, black and hopeless. Take the last stanzas of three of the "*Dramatic Lyrics*"—"Popularity," "Respectability," and "Another Way of Love"—no living man, however experienced in the judgment of poetic values, can unravel such etymological tangles at one reading.

They have a kind of mad meaning; they give the reader a sense of a clue now lost, now found; but who can say, at the first glance, what the poet had in mind? We quote one verse:

And after, for pastime,
If June be refulgent
With flowers in completeness,
All petals, no prickles,
Delicious as trickles
Of wine poured at mass-time—
And choose One indulgent
To redness and sweetness.

Or if, with experience of man and of spider,
June use my June-lightning, the strong insect-rider,
And stop the fresh film-work—why, June will consider.*

If at the third attempt this becomes intelligible, the lucky reader may well proceed to meditate upon a more famous example of intricacy—"Sordello." There are passages in that great story of a poet which have baffled the finest critics. Apart from legerdemain with grammar and syntax, and the unruly canter of Browning's favourite steed *Ellipsis*, the ordinary reader is here at a tremendous disadvantage, for he is presumed to be fully equipped with a knowledge of Italian history at one of its most confused and confusing periods—a knowledge which not one person in ten thousand possesses. He will also need a glossary for some of the uncouth words coined or annexed by the poet. "Sordello" has been described as "a fault throughout, in conception and execution," and Dean Church says, "It is quite certain that nothing can be done with it, nothing can be made of it, without more trouble than we usually expect to be called upon to give to any book but one of high mathematics."

We venture here a suggestion to all who have hitherto avoided "Sordello," or who have tried to read it and given up in despair. It is that they read it again, not for the sake of any coherent story, but for the sake of the pure and delightful poetry of isolated passages. Thus reading they will find gems of rarest loveliness set in the rough matrix of this extraordinary poem. Let us give a vivid illustration of the point—a little cameo of evening:

A last remains of sunset dimly burned
O'er the far forests, like a torch-flame turned
By the wind back upon its bearer's hand
In one long flare of crimson; as a brand
The woods beneath lay black.

* For contrast with this, compare the love-lyric "In Three Days," with its perfect simplicity and clarity.

It is a magical little picture; the unerring touch of a master on the canvas, full of colour and storm and life. There are many such in "Sordello"; for them let the weaker brethren take heart of grace and be thankful.

With his rhyming Browning was often inexcusably careless; in some instances his perverse ingenuity leads to a positively ludicrous effect, and one is compelled to wonder how the poet who composed such exquisite lyrics as "Evelyn Hope" or "A Woman's Last Word" could possibly allow such dissonances and strained verbal infelicities to reach the stage of print. In his haste he seems to stick at nothing. "Fabric" and "dab brick," "failure" and "pale lure," "more, rose" and "morose," "perorate" and "zero rate," "thick clime" and "quick-lime"—these are just a few; readers will also recollect the fearful convulsion of emphasis which concludes the "Pied Piper of Hamelin":

And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise!

Did he perpetrate these enormities with a laugh at his own perversity? Often, we imagine, he must have done so; else we must esteem him less.

When whole volumes have been written on Browning, it is obviously not possible to treat here his plays and his longer poems. In our next article, however, we shall discuss briefly his determined optimism, and its source, before passing on to consider briefly the right of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, his wife, to rank with the poets of this remarkable period.

A TURNED PAGE OF HISTORY

THERE are few corners of England in which the history of her youth is written in clearer character than is the case on the south-eastern knuckle of land, fronting the narrow strait across which gleam the white walls of France. Of course, the Straits of Dover are, geologically speaking, modern. When the last glacial epoch began to wane, a giant edition of the Rhine flowed out over a tract now covered by the North Sea, and impinged upon the opposite shore of a gulf. This river struck the Norfolk coast near Happisburgh, and thence ricocheted toward the north. The Cromer Forest bed, and the extension of this bed across the Wash, roughly chart the line which the great stream must have taken. When the severity of the glacial climate relaxed, there followed a melting of snows upon a colossal scale. The old-world Rhine, although probably a stream of Amazonian dimensions, thus acquired the velocity of a cataract. It is surmised that its waters, impounded in the narrow gulf, and unable to get away freely to the north, welled up until they breached the ridges of chalk lying to the south and tore the rent which we now call Dover Straits. That old-time flood created a new world. The retreat of the reindeer, the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, and other relics of a lost fauna was cut off. The species lingered on for a time, for they were tribes of hardy brutes, but at last they became extinct. No doubt the arch-butcher, Man, did his best to worry them out of existence. That far-away type of Man, their contemporary, was himself a creature of Nature. The long-skulled Palæolith, as his rude flint weapons dropped here and there testify, hunted his four-footed prey along the southern edge of the glacial ice-cap which ran from the Thames valley to Bristol.

Round-skulled invaders from overseas hunted him in turn. Thus have the waves of history beat upon the shores of Kent and Sussex, from the dawning of the day when the white cliffs were moulded and carved out of the

virgin chalk Downs, by the flood tool. In this part of the country the Cinque Ports, a relic of antique law and rule, are interesting survivals. Their constitution carries us back to Saxon kings. Their records enable us to reconstruct and recall, as in a glass darkly, an early economy. These Ports were a chain of harbours, possessing special privileges and responsibilities. Their authorities might bicker among themselves, but the primary duty of them all was to defend the shores of England from invasion. Early England was the home of the "voluntary system," and the Armada was, to a large extent, beaten by private enterprise. Our national Navy is a plant of late growth. Even so, under the protection of the Cinque Ports, the foreign foes of England were held at bay. Her "little Englanders" had short shrift. The Cinque Ports were mainly instrumental in holding England inviolate from foreign conquest, from the period of the Norman kings to the time of the decay of the power of Spain. The physical conformation of our south-eastern coastline has changed within the historic period, for when their royal charters were granted the Cinque Ports were veritably a series of havens, in capacity suitable to the craft of the day.

The early crossers of the Atlantic sailed in boats the size of a Brixham trawler, but when the Armada came up Channel the nimbleness and seaworthiness of the English craft, and the indomitable skill with which they were handled, enabled the stripling to lay the giant low. It is believed that Edward the Confessor incorporated Dover, Sandwich, and Romney as privileged ports. After the Conquest, William added Hastings and Hythe, thus creating the Five Ports. Hastings, the scene of his successful landing, was constituted chief port. The question of its priority has been the cause of much antiquarian dispute up to the present day, but the point was disposed of by the late Lord Dufferin, when Lord Warden. At the inaugural banquet of the harbour undertaking at Hastings, in 1897, he gave his ruling in favour of Hastings as the Premier Cinque Port. Hastings held its head several inches higher after that banquet, the fact that she is not yet in possession of her modern port being a matter of secondary consequence. The rights and privileges of Cinque Porthood, as established by numerous charters, are still jealously claimed. Their government was under the jurisdiction of two courts. The Great Court was held by Royal summons at Shepway Cross, near Hythe, under the presidency of the Lord Warden. The Court of Guestling was held annually at New Romney. It is a Parliament in little, presided over by a Speaker. The Lord Warden's jurisdiction is from Red Cliff, near Seaford, to Shoe Beacon, in Essex. An Act of Henry VIII. ordered that "Everie person who goeth into the Navy of the Portis shal have a cote of White cotyn with a red crosse and the arms of the Portis underneath; that is to say, the halfe lyon and the halfe ship." One of the most cherished rights of this old brotherhood has been that of carrying the canopy over the queen at coronations. In the stage directions of "King Henry VIII." (Act IV., Scene I.) the order of procession includes "The Canopy borne by four of the Cinque Ports; under it the Queen in her robe."

The mention of the Cinque Ports raises a most interesting side issue—namely, that of the sites of the harbours themselves, for these have mostly withered away, under Time's effacing fingers. A Royal Commission has been sitting for several years on the subject of coast erosion and land reclamation. Both these matters loom large in the history of the Cinque Ports. Our prevailing winds are from the west and south-west, and the flood tide in the English Channel is both longer and stronger than the ebb. These causes have produced progressive silting, wherever a headland or harbour exists, by reason of the travel of

shingle and sand from west to east, under the impulsion of wind-waves. The sea is for ever struggling to obliterate salient points, and to plane down the coastline to a uniformly sweeping contour. In the elbow formed between the French and Belgian coasts, where sand prevails and shingle is scarce, the trouble is greater than along our side of the Straits, to the west of the Foreland. At Dunkirk, for instance, the authorities for 250 years built their piers farther and farther out into the sea in the hope of outstripping the sand travel, and in the end had to fall back on the panacea of constant dredging. The "inning" of lands overflowed by the sea has been steadily proceeding from before Roman times. These two causes have brought about the practical extinction of the Cinque Ports for modern craft. Romney Marsh was embanked before the Romans landed, as the Roman relics found there testify. By whom it was embanked is mere guesswork. The tradition is that men from the Netherlands built the Rhee Wall from Romney to Appledore. Even in the fourteenth century Winchelsea and Rye were islands in an inland sea, which stretched away to Bodiam and Brede, Smallhythe, and Appledore. Romney Marsh lies from 7ft. to 11ft. below high-water level, Guildeford Marsh from 9ft. to 19ft. below this level.

Norden's map of the coast, dated 1676, contains much interesting matter. At Hastings it shows two distinct creeks or havens, and an island about a mile and a half long, immediately to the west of the town. "Old Winchelsey drowned" is indicated by a sand bank, at the mouth of an extensive estuary, on the border of which is marked a church tower, labelled "Old Rumney." Leland, in Henry VIII.'s day, reported, of Romney, that "It has bene a netely good haven, yn so much that withyn remembrance of men shyppes have cum harde up to the towne and caste anores yn one of the churchyardes. The se is now a II myles fro the towne." The town struggled against the extinction of its harbour for centuries. At Hythe, in Elizabeth's reign, when the movement of the littoral drift was becoming uncontrollable, the record tells how a "Hollandyr" was engaged to lay out a new harbour. In spite of all the talents, however, things went from bad to worse, until, in 1634, it was reported that the passage was "absolutely stopped and starved up." It is the same tale throughout. The only Cinque Port which retains something of its ancient character is Sandwich. The story of the diversion and shoaling of the River Stour is too long to tell. The estuary of the Stour was in all probability the port from which, in the pre-Roman times, the tin of the Cassiterides was exported, after a journey on the backs of mules from Cornwall. The Phœnician explorer, who tracked his way through that wild region, perchance was awarded a gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society of his day. He must have taken his life in his hand. In spite of its sand blockade, Sandwich still has its navigable channel, by which small vessels sail up to the quaint medieval town. If Sandwich were on the Italian coast the British tourist would have discovered it ere this. Happily, he now passes it by for the more highly flavoured attractions of Ramsgate and Margate. Dover Harbour is an area of open sea fenced off by breakwaters. It is purely an artificial creation, unprotected from southerly and westerly gales, and not landlocked. Hastings Harbour, when completed, will, in the same way, be an entirely artificial work. In the construction of its works the contour of the ancient cliff-line is revealed by the conformation of the sea-bed, below low-water line.

Thus the battle has been waged by sea and land, since the balance of the littoral forces has been disturbed. The ancient statesman—good, easy man—dreaming of conquering new lands by shutting out the sea, has weakened the force of scour and brought the burden of the sea-drift upon his back. Then his havens have been wiped out, in spite of all his toil and trouble, and he has been set down afresh to study the laws of profit and loss. It is a homily on an old text. Loss and compensation go hand in hand. The old order changeth, yielding place to new, but neither old nor new is free from flaw and alloy.

THE JAPANESE WOMAN

THE Chinese ideogram for "mysterious, unknowable" consists of two parts, the one meaning "young" and the other "woman." By this we may infer that in China young women are synonymous with that which is unknowable. So many people, however, have written about the Japanese woman—Lafcadio Hearn, Pierre Loti, Sir Edwin Arnold, to mention only three names—that we are beginning to find that Nippon's women are far from being unknowable, and the more we hear about them the better we like them. The Japanese woman has something which is very much akin to the heart of a child, and, in addition, something that is tenderly self-sacrificing, something that savours of flowers and running streams. She does not resemble that colossal Western phantasy we call the "Eternal Feminine," a mighty goddess for ever leaping from our grasp. The manifestation of love in Japan is very different to what it is in the West. To the Japanese our marriage system differs but little from the mating of birds. To them our love for husband or wife seems almost grossly selfish, in that it nearly always necessitates the cleaving from father and mother. In Japan the husband's father and mother always live with the newly married couple, and they receive a devotion and regard almost beyond our power of comprehension. "Father and mother at my pillow, Wife and children at my feet" is typical of Japanese home-life. The mother-in-law in England, until quite recently, used to be made a subject for coarse jest in the worst possible taste. Even to-day she is generally regarded as something that is scarcely to be tolerated with newly married people. "Two women in the home would never do!" we say. And yet in Japan it has brought out the finest qualities in the Japanese woman—self-control, extreme courtesy, a constant desire to please, and implicit obedience.

What a splendid mother the Japanese woman is! She has, as she should have, the entire control of her children. Nurses and nurseries do not hinder her constant influence upon her offspring. It is she who gives her good women and her brave men to Japan. She will go nowhere if her baby child cannot come too. Even an empress is not exempt from this duty of service, and that which in England we often leave to the mechanical and undiscerning hand of a servant is lovingly and willingly performed by the Japanese wife. Mrs. A. M. Bacon has told us that Japanese children, whether they go out to play or come in for a meal, always make their pretty little bows first of all to their mother. When the mother goes out, all her children and servants escort her to the garden gate, and welcome her upon her return. This is no picture of a dull domestic drudge dressed up in a pretty kimono. Far from it. The Japanese woman is much too refined, much too accomplished, to ever become so demoralising a person as a domestic drudge. Nearly always she can compose very excellent poetry. There is a Japanese game that consists in composing verse. Some of the greatest Japanese writers were women, and on account of the curious personal element, their work reads as fresh to-day as it did when first written. As an example of this point, a passage from Sei Shonagon's "Makura Zoshi" ("Pillow Sketches") may be quoted: "A preacher ought to be a good-looking man. It is then easier to keep your eyes fixed on his face, without which it is impossible to benefit by the discourse. Otherwise the eyes wander and you forget to listen. Ugly preachers have therefore a great responsibility." This was written before the Norman Conquest! The Japanese woman frequently takes a delight in rearing silkworms. How much care she bestows upon these creatures, capable of creating, with the aid of the loom and other processes, costly and beautiful bales of silk! Then, if she is married, she makes all her clothes and those of her husband and children. She makes and receives calls, and performs the tea ceremony, with all its intricate etiquette, with charming grace. She arranges the flowers in the vase. What an æsthetic arrangement it is, too! No confused jumble of multitudinous flowers, no specimen vases mathematically set upon a table-centre and shamefully

belying the ways of Nature—just a spray of cherry blossom, a sprig of maple leaves, a chrysanthemum, according to the season of the year; that is all! But how beautiful it is in its quiet simplicity! A white chrysanthemum and snow on the ground? No, no; that would be monstrous. The good housewife always avoids similarity. And in the old days men would sit placidly gazing at a vase of flowers, finding, as indeed we all might find, much food for spiritual contemplation.

The Western woman proverbially dislikes admitting her age. But in Japan such an attitude is regarded as mere foolishness. The Japanese woman's beauty fades at the early age of thirty-five. The colour goes from her cheek, and the once smooth face crumples a little into wrinkles. But they are honourable wrinkles, and nothing to be ashamed of. Every year her kimono becomes less splendid with colour and design; every year sees a modifying change in her coiffure, until we see an old lady going about like a large grey moth. And does this fading of youth distress her? Not at all. She looks forward to old age much as a mariner looks forward to sailing into a sheltered port after a rough and lengthy voyage. The Japanese smile, about which Lafcadio Hearn has written so beautifully, still lingers, more beautiful because it tells, in such an irresistible fashion, of the crowning glory of years spent with the trials and joys of life. We see in Japan no distressing spectacle of an old lady trying, by artificial means, to preserve her youth and beauty. The old woman of Japan realises that it is in old age, rather than in youth, that the completion of love really comes. Nature and the Japanese woman resemble each other very much. Both drink life to the full, both blossom and sing for joy in the sunshine, both go down into the Land of the Yellow Spring in quiet, sombre robes, suggesting humility as well as a great peace. There is something significant in the fact that poor, aged Japanese women are often employed in picking out grass and moss from ancient walls. With tired, weary hands they strengthen a city's walls, and some day the Lord Buddha will take away, with hands that never tire, all the undermining sorrows that found their way into the hard places of their lives. Then they will know the truth of the Japanese words: "Dost thou feel the soil of thy soul stirred with tender thoughts? Disturb it not with speech, but let it work alone in quietness and secrecy."

What place does the Japanese woman hold in Buddhism? All the most lovable of the Buddhist deities are goddesses, with the exception of Jizō, the god of children. This in itself is an answer to the question. Curiously enough, Shinran propounded the alarming theory that it was impossible for women to attain Nirvana unless re-born as men! This reminds us of the still more fatuous remark of Mohammed on the same subject: "O assembly of women, give alms, although it be of your gold and silver ornaments; for verily ye are mostly of Hell on the Day of Resurrection." The Lord Buddha certainly had no such absurdly narrow belief. In the *Sutra* of the "Lotus of the Good Law" we find mention of a woman who, in a single moment, became a Bodhisattva—that is, entered into the state of complete enlightenment—whereas even the Lord Buddha only attained Nirvana after much tribulation and much time spent in contemplation. The most beautiful and touching festival, the Festival of the Dead, or the Feast of Lanterns, was inaugurated by a woman, and it was a Japanese empress who forbade the destruction of animals for food, probably due in some measure to the influence of Buddhism. Shintōism, or the "Way of the Gods," is Japan's national religion. It might be more tersely described as the religion of loyalty in which such aggressive ideas as Nietzsche sets forth can find no place. Not super-man, but the one for the many, is the practice of the Japanese. Bushido, perhaps the most wonderful name in Japan, sums up the best in the Japanese people. Bushido corresponds as nearly as possible to that splendid spirit of chivalry we find in the "Morte d'Arthur"—chivalry too broad and deep for any sentimentalism. In the Japanese woman, quite as much as in the Japanese man,

we find that brave and loyal spirit of devotion to duty, devoid of all selfish aims. During the late Russo-Japanese war wives were found to be as brave as their soldier husbands. When the final leave-taking came, more than one Japanese woman was heard to say, "Don't come back again! Die for the glory of the Mikado!" An aged mother once sat in her little home when news was brought to her of her son's death in a great naval battle. Calmly, and in a clear, unfaltering voice, she said to the bearer of the news, "So it seems by your tidings that my son has been of some service this time!"

Just as Smiles' "Self-Help" has been the means of guiding many young Englishmen into the paths of success, so in Japan has Karbara's "Onna Daigaku" ("The Greater Learning for Women") considerably influenced the Japanese woman in all her ways. Although some of Karbara's utterances, like those of our Jeremy Taylor, are somewhat austere, many of them are full of wisdom. "The only qualities," says he, "that befit a woman are gentle obedience, chastity, mercy, and quietness." And, again: "Never set thyself up against thy husband with harsh features and a boisterous voice!" It must be conceded that among the better class married people of Japan there is a lack of comradeship in marriage. The higher we seem to go in the social scale the broader the difference becomes between husband and wife. Among the poorer classes, however, we find a more mutual understanding the one for the other. Lafcadio Hearn has given us a rendering from a poor Japanese woman's diary, revealing a tenderness that is as sweet as it is sad. She married, rather late in life, a poor man whom she recognised as being rather strict. "I resolved," she wrote, "to so conduct myself in all matters as never to cross his will." She realised what her love for her husband meant, and her one desire was "always to dwell with this person, dearer to me than any flower, until we enter the *Shirahige-Yashiro* (period of old age). That we may so remain together, I supplicate the Gods!" Three children were born to them, but they all died soon after birth. She writes, with infinite tenderness: "If I could only have known! Ah, this parting with the flower, for which I would so gladly have given my own life, has left my sleeves wet with dew!" This last phrase referred to her tears. With that pitiful but powerful Fatalism of the East this couple attributed the loss of their children to some sin of their own! Shortly after the birth of her third child, this quiet, loving mother passed away. At the end she realised the teaching of Saigō: "Make not Man thy partner but Heaven, and making Heaven thy partner do thy best." In full measure this Japanese woman, with her tender simplicity, her delight in going to the theatre with her husband, in watching the azaleas bloom, had learnt the sad yearning and the sweet joy of the "ah-ness of things." She who had scarce given springtime to her children passed at the last into the Land of the Yellow Spring.

REVIEWS

OUR SOUTH-WESTERN SHORES

The South Devon and Dorset Coast. By SIDNEY HEATH. Illustrated. (Fisher Unwin. 6s. net.)

"THE South Devon and Dorset Coast" is a useful guide to the pedestrian, and Mr. Heath's book is singularly well-informed with regard to places and objects of archaeological interest, the castles, churches, and old houses, small and great, within easy reach of the coast between Plymouth and Poole. As an antiquary, he sounds a note of warning against the tendencies of "this commercial age," and tells us that some of the historic monuments of the two counties have been destroyed within recent years. At Plymouth, for example, nearly all the old houses have been swept away to make room for what are called "improvements." In Cattle Street was an old mansion, "Palace Court," originally the residence of a rich

merchant named Paynter, who entertained Katherine of Arragon on her arrival in England in 1501. This building was pulled down only a few years ago to make room for a new Board School. As Mr. Heath truly says, "To demolish an historic old building of this kind to provide a site for a Board School was not advancing education, but retarding it. It is surely time that the custody of all our old buildings was placed away from the influence of purely local interests and municipal politics."

A glance through the records of the ancient town of Lyme furnishes us with some interesting sidelights upon the punishments of the seventeenth century. Castigation was cheap. The charge of fourpence was apparently the standard rate of payment for whipping a boy. The whipping of a woman who was a stranger to the town cost little more, but the punishment of a townswoman was a more expensive matter, as is shown by the following record:—

	s.	d.
1625 For whipping William Wynter's boy ...	0	4
" " Agnes Abbott twice.....	2	4
1644 Paid two soldiers to attend the whipping of a woman	2	6
Paid to whipping four women	4	0

Such methods are, of course, no longer in use in towns, but many of the customs of Dorset villages are still as unchanged as in the unchanging East. In some fishing villages here, at the beginning of the season, the fishers put out to sea with their boats loaded with flowers, which they scatter on the waves and ask that their boat may be blessed with good luck. Returning to the shore, cakes and ale are buried in the sand. The natives say they do this for good luck and because their fathers did likewise before them.

There can be no better guide than Mr. Heath to the Devon and Dorset coast, which he knows so well, down to the smallest villages which the guide-books assure us possess no feature of interest. His defects consist of certain misapprehensions rather than mistakes with regard to the literary side of his subject. It is a misapprehension to say of the historian, James Anthony Froude, that "it is not generally known that he took Holy Orders," and Thomas Love Peacock, the friend of Shelley, the author of "Crotchet Castle," has many claims to be remembered besides the fact that he was father-in-law to George Meredith.

Causeries du Lundi. (Vol. VI., April, 1851—June, 1851.)
By C. A. SAINTE-BEUVE. Translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by E. J. TRENCHMAN, M.A., Ph.D.
(George Routledge and Sons. 1s. net.)

THE "Causeries du Lundi" form a very acceptable addition to Messrs Routledge's handy and attractive "New Universal Library." Sainte-Beuve is one of those authors who do not exert all their charm at once; as we begin to know him a little we get to wish to know him well, and from dipping into Sainte-Beuve to reading the whole of his published work in criticism is an easy step. He is the prince, as his countrymen are the aristocracy, of literary critics. He had the advantage of beginning to write just at the moment when the Romantic Movement had stirred curiosity to its depths, and he became in some measure the official critic of Romanticism. He deluged the world with appreciations and biographies, demonstrating, by sheer mass of evidence, the fundamental doctrine of his school, that

"There are nine and sixty ways
Of constructing tribal lays,
And every single one of them is right."

To his task he brought the treasures of an extraordinarily receptive and retentive mind, and a private theory, of which he made the frame for his critical web, that there are intellectual families, and that it is for the critic to trace their pedigrees. This theory is very strikingly exemplified in two of the "causeries" of the present volume—in that on Saint-Evremond and Ninon, and in that on

Madame de Lambert; essays on Montaigne and Madame Necker are here to help us to follow up his idea in the two cases mentioned.

Certainly the most interesting "causerie" in this volume, which is the sixth of the series, is that on Montaigne. It is marked by a strange note of personal tenderness. Sainte-Beuve appears to be drawn to this author by one of his own intellectual relationships. He records his dictum on critics—"There are more books on books than on any other subject; we do nothing but gloss each other. Commentators swarm on all sides; of authors there is great dearth." The cap fits, but the arch-critic refuses to put it on—at least, in public. Other essays of more than ordinary interest are the three on Mirabeau, two of which are concerned with his *liaison* with Madame de Mounier, and the other with the La Marek correspondence, and the essay on Saint-Evremond and Ninon. The translation is good, and well represents Sainte-Beuve's rather terse style.

Michael Kohlhaas. By HEINRICH VON KLEIST. Adapted and Edited by F. W. WILSON, Ph.D. Siepmann's Advanced German Series. (Macmillan and Co. 2s. 6d.)

"MICHAEL KOHLHAAS" is a worthy member of an excellent series. The linguistic methods that are associated with the name of Dr. Siepmann are very judiciously applied; literature receives honourable acknowledgment as an integral factor in the learning of a language. To those who are acquainted with some of the manifestations of modern methods this will be high praise. The divorce between literary and spoken language has been of late so strongly insisted on that we have been in some danger of losing a large part of our literary curriculum, with its obvious educational qualities, in favour of a mechanical system of tongue-drill. The story of "Michael Kohlhaas" is interesting, and is told with great art and power. The notes are very well done; a very helpful device is the rendering of difficult passages, not by an English translation, but by a simpler German paraphrase. Exercises and vocabularies are added to serve as material for oral teaching on modern lines.

FICTION

Rags. By ARTHUR APPLIN. (F. V. White and Co. 6s. net.)

THERE have been many attempts to solve the problem which Lady Letty Lumley, the high-spirited daughter of the Duke of Marford, wished to solve. At the present day a solution is being eagerly sought for. The problem is one that has defied every age, and will continue to defy all ages that are to come. Perhaps the most practical effort which has been made, on the part of Man, to solve it (and we might say that we are speaking of the problem of poverty) was that made by Francis of Assisi. We are all acquainted with the result of the great Umbrian's experiment. His enthusiasm, foredoomed to failure, lacked the insurance of wisdom. In like manner Lady Letty Lumley sought to be practical, and was moved to an extreme act by the influence of the Salvation Army. Her experiences as a fanatic form the material of Mr. Applin's latest work, which proves very entertaining and distinctly instructive. By it the fact is driven home that sin is entirely a human affair, and really has nothing to do with poverty or riches. It is our human ideals which are responsible for the confusion. Thus, to hold that the poverty of the East End is an actual source of vice and wickedness is as good as maintaining that the wealth of the West End is an actual source of virtue and righteousness, which we all know to be absurd. Money, as a matter of fact, is a living necessity, and has, as far as we know, always been one, but it never has been and never will be a moral necessity. Why, then, does Man persist in making it a moral necessity? For instance, why in the name of Reason should Lady Letty Lumley choose poverty to wealth—exchange Grosvenor Square for Whitechapel—when there is no moral benefit to be

gained by such a choice? Whitechapel is not to be saved in that manner—neither is it to be saved by a hundred Salvation Armies. There is only one way of redeeming the East End from its appalling state of misery and sin. This way is plainly stated by Lord Arthur Polestick, who, though termed a dull person by his own class, nevertheless possesses a fair amount of wisdom.

"Whitechapel," says he, "must work out its own salvation."

Character, and not money, is what is needed for our moral uplifting. Are we not, therefore, on the wrong road? Mr. Applin evidently thinks so, and for good reasons. We are making much ado about the poverty of Whitechapel and the wealth of Grosvenor Square as though the transference of riches from the one to the other would create a moral atmosphere. The greatest of all facts is lost sight of—namely, that with such a transference human nature remains the same. Starvation, indeed, might be thus arrested, but only for a while—that is to say, until such a time when the transferred wealth became exhausted. Besides, the West End itself is proof that money is not allied with a moral necessity. This being so, we can well understand why Lady Letty Lumley, in the same way as Francis of Assisi, failed in producing any common form of morality. It would, of course, be wrong to assume that extraordinary struggles with poverty produce no moral characteristics. Both the merchant's son and the duke's daughter belie such an assumption. What is contended in this novel is the fact of the barren immorality of the ordinary struggle with poverty—a barrenness which must ever remain until such a time as Man's brute nature becomes absolutely or divinely subjugated by his spirit nature.

We have really powerful instances of the common and uncommon forces at work in our midst in the personalities of the Terror of Whitechapel and the Duke of Marford's heroic daughter. The author's keen sense of justice in dealing with high and low is to be seen in the character sketches of Lord Arthur Polestick and Florrie Gray. Both the East End and the West End can lay claim to products of human worth.

The Romantic Road. By GUY RAWLENCE. (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

THIS is a galloping story from start to finish. A frontispiece of the heroine, "Wild Will," a noted highwayman (or Julia Vane, to give her her proper name), presents a very attractive picture of the lady, wearing a hat with feathers quite as large as the modern mode. The time of the story is Farmer George's reign, and Sir Michael Stanton, Bart., a West Country worthy, after being jilted by a fashionable beauty in town and fighting a duel with her new lover in consequence, determines to return to his ancestral home in quiet Devon. But he meets his fate on the way thither; and, after much hard riding and perils of all sorts, in which the heroine, in the guise first of "Wild Will," and afterwards in her own proper character, shares, the story ends in Sir Michael changing, happily for him, from a disappointed trifter about the town of that period, with its card-playing and hard drinking, into a man of action. There is a wicked, roystering gambler and hard-drinking squire, and a miserly father, to fill the story, but all combine to make up a very cheery chronicle of the doings of the time, and will give the reader needing a breezy country tale with plenty of adventure the relaxation which such books ought to give, and which this one certainly does. The story ends by Sir Michael saying, "'And so the adventures are over—the wild life done with. No more wild rides, no more fears and tremors, no more escapades on the road.' She sighed. 'Julia, you regret it?' 'Maybe I should—but for you,' was her answer." The writer is evidently familiar with Wiltshire and its downs, and his descriptions of the country and its hostleries add much to the interest of the story.

The "Reverend" Rachel Euphemia. By J. HENRY. (Simpkin and Co. 2s. net.)

THIS little work is evidently meant for a travesty. Euphemia Chit is a "lady-worker" in the rural district of Wansforth, and, as such, she possesses the peculiar ideas of the crank reformer. One is made to appreciate such traits of character by the author's portraiture. Her age was thirty-five, and she was tall, with typical clerical-cut features. Her dress was a tight-fitting costume of black material, with white linen collar and cuffs and a black straw hat, whilst her hair was cut quite short. Hence the reason of the prefix Reverend. We are further told that "she had taken one year's course at a ladies' settlement, as one takes the waters of Marienbad, which completely inured her against true parochial work for women—to visit the fatherless and widows, to feed the hungry, to visit the sick and those in trouble, to offer such spiritual consolation as a Christian lady can give." Apart from the one-sidedness of her ideals, Miss Chit is by no means an unlovable creature. Her desire to do good is genuine enough, for when brought face to face with the narrowness of her formulas, she displays an uncommon sense of righteousness by her gentle attitude of submission. Her peculiarities, in fact, are merely theoretical. There are, no doubt, many Miss Chits in the world, yet, although the writer is to be complimented on the choice of his subject, he needs a word of caution with respect to its treatment, which in many instances can only be termed commonplace.

The Dragon Painter. By SIDNEY MCCALL. Illustrated by GERTRUDE McDANIEL. (Stanley Paul and Co. 6s.)

KANO INDARA, a Japanese artist, living for his art alone and looking for a successor, is the father of an only daughter brought up under the care of Mata, an old family servant with all the devotion and privileges of free speech which only old servants possess. Kano discovers Tatsu, who is best described as a madman, but an artist according to Japanese ideas, and marries him to his daughter, who, luckily enough for her, finds the man of her dreams. The young artist, however, loses his art in his new-found love for his wife, and what happens between the art and love struggles, aided by a pious (priest-arranged) fraud, in a sort of triangular duel, must be learnt by reading the book itself. The pictures of Japanese life are strikingly drawn, and although there are few characters in the book, they each have a strong individuality which, to lovers of Japanese stories, will prove very attractive. The work, written by, presumably, an Englishman or Scotsman, shows a thorough acquaintance with the people, their religion and ways, and coming at a time when it will be easy for many unacquainted with Japan in reality to make a partial acquaintance with its art in the present Exhibition, the story will probably find many readers. There are a few phrases in the volume worthy of especial notice. Tear-money is a very expressive term for the proceeds of a forced sale of family treasures, and Kano, in speaking of his wife, who died quite young, describes her very poetically. "A Flower having blossomed in the night—the Halls of the Gods are fragrant." The illustrations are quite in keeping with the story.

The Wheels of Time. By FLORENCE L. BARCLAY. (Putnam's Sons. 1s. net.)

THERE is a grace of style about Miss Barclay's writing which is singularly attractive. What she has to say is important, inasmuch as her characters, even though possessed of a certain charm, are not exempt from certain weaknesses. In this little book we are introduced to the wife of a brilliant young doctor, who, although a model partner, is unconsciously selfish. This failing is noticed by one who has acted as god-mother to one of the children. An opportunity occurs for making the fact of such weakness patent to the young wife. She is brought to see

her danger, but with tantalising fickleness she lets the wheels of time move forward without taking advantage of the opportunity given her. The result is, she receives such a terrible lesson as well nigh to cause the loss of reason. The wheels of time, so thoughtlessly scorned, were not to be put back. But, if Judgment played harshly with her soul, Fate, with a divine mercy, eventually brought joy to dispel the awful sorrow.

THE THEATRE

WITH great interest we have been watching the revivals of some of Robertson's plays at the Coronet Theatre. They have been very much appreciated, and very fairly well played by a company more enthusiastic than brilliant, which has been apparently coached by someone who knew how these plays were performed originally. Very rightly the well-known parts have been played in the well-known manner, so that the peculiar early-Victorian atmosphere has been retained to a great extent. To have introduced into them new readings would have been to have performed an act of vandalism such as was threatened at Oxford, where recently the whole University shuddered because it was rumoured that the crumbling walls of St. John's College were to be plastered.

To our mind much good is done both to actors and to playgoers by the revival from time to time of Robertson's plays. We know very well that the "New" playwright and the "New" critic love to spend themselves in well-thought-out impromptus made up of sarcasm and scorn at the mere mention of these pieces, which made a fine fortune for Sir Squire Bancroft, and gave playgoers of his time almost their first knowledge of good, honest, domestic drama. Compared with the modern work of Pinero, Carton, Haddon Chambers, Bernard Shaw, and the late Robert Marshall, they are what Frith's "Derby Day" is to the work of Burne-Jones and Sargent. In construction, in dialogue and in their general suggestion of artlessness they are, of course, typically early-Victorian, but they are early-Victorian in the best sense of that much-used term of opprobrium. Their sentiment, as well as their humour, is laid on very thick. The dialogue is flowery, stilted, hyperbolic. Be that as it may, they all contain that inimitable touch of humanity and sincerity which will keep them evergreen so long as they are played according to tradition.

We cannot help believing that our dramatists would do well if they were to leave their superiority at home and undergo a course of Robertson revivals; they underwent a course of Ibsen some years ago, and have never recovered wholesomeness. They would find to their infinite surprise that the playgoer of to-day is no different from the playgoer of the day before yesterday. They would be obliged to come to the conclusion, however reluctantly, that tired people go to the theatre for mental relaxation rather than as medical students to the dissecting theatre of the hospital. Such a course might, and probably would, be the means of introducing into the modern theatre a healthier, simpler, and more sincere note than there is to be found in it at present. Sex problems and thief plays would disappear, at any rate for a time, to the infinite relief both of the man in the street and the clubman.

We have always held, and we shall continue to hold, to the belief that the theatre is nothing but a place of entertainment. It is not and ought not to be a school for teaching anything else than that virtue is always rewarded and villainy severely punished. There is no reason whatever, for all that, why the entertainment provided by the theatre should not contain much that is human, simple, and sincere, and so become of value in a perfectly unobtrusive manner. The reason, we take it, why Mr. Robert Arthur, of the Coronet Theatre, has given the Robertson revivals is not because he desired to provide our dramatists with an object-lesson, but simply because he knows from experience that playgoers will always welcome plays

of sentiment and humour, and he was not able to get them from modern writers. We are very glad to think that Mr. Robert Arthur has been rewarded for his temerity and knowledge. We are equally sorry to know that he was unable to place his hand upon even a few modern plays which contain the ingredients of what we may call the Robertsonian dish.

So little does the average manager know the public taste that writers for the stage regard it as a waste of time to send them work which does not contain a thief, a problem, or an incident which is not what is called strong. They know that if they write a merely charming play they will receive it back again with a badly worded letter, in which the word "thin" is frequently used. It will be dubbed "too charming, too simple, too unexciting to attract," and so, in the face of the success of the Robertson revivals at an outlying theatre, interpreted by a company of mediocre talent, we are still to be given plays written round thieves, Apaches, and sexual problems. It is all very wonderful and very extraordinary.

We venture to say that if Mr. J. E. Vedrenne, or some such man who has bought his experience and who does not wish to run a theatre in order to advertise himself, were to commission six or seven of our leading dramatists to write plays of the Robertson school, he would have a series of great successes. He would have to disabuse his mind of the conventional belief that playgoers cannot be induced to enter a theatre unless the programme is headed with the name of some actor or actress who has been "boomed" as the perpetrator of something other than acting, and who would for this reason be paid a perfectly preposterous salary, which would help to jeopardise the run of the play. He would have to be taught that because an actor or an actress is in receipt of two hundred a week for appearing twice a day at a music hall, he or she will do nothing to bring the music-hall public to his theatre, or play the part entrusted to her as well as an actress of equal experience who has never appeared in a music hall or drawn two hundred a week. He would have, in a word, to awaken to the fact that a theatre cannot be run successfully unless the expenses are lower than the receipts, and that the British public much prefers a play to be well acted by people whose names are wholly unknown to them than to be badly acted by a company of so-called stars who are paragraphed as being in receipt of salaries far in excess of those earned by viceroys, lord chief justices, commanders-in-chief, and great surgeons.

A glance at a paragraph in which are given details of Mr. Vedrenne's forthcoming production makes us at once withdraw his name in connection with our optimistic prediction, because from this paragraph we see that Mr. Vedrenne is imitating the bad methods of his fellow-managers, and is at the outset of his enterprise weighing it down with a list of salaries which will make it very difficult for him to produce a reasonable profit. At the Court Theatre, when Mr. Vedrenne was in partnership with Mr. Granville Barker, his policy was to cast plays with the best available talent for the least possible expense, and to rely wholly upon the play. The Court Theatre, under the management of Messrs. Vedrenne and Barker, did epoch-making work, and their period in management is still written about with enthusiasm and gratitude. It is a curious sign of managerial weakness that Mr. Vedrenne, when entering management alone, should depart so entirely from his old policy and fall into line with what we may call the Frohman school. We hope very much that Mr. Vedrenne will have a great success with Mr. Locke's new play. If he does it will not be owing to any or all of the names upon his programme, except that of Mr. W. J. Locke. So that, again reverting to our optimistic prediction, we must look to some entirely new man with more common sense than capital, with more courage than imitative faculties, to commission our well-known playwrights to write Robertsonian plays! We are not now able to look to Mr. Herbert Trench to do this for us, because even he, in the face of all his unconventional statements, has fallen a victim to the star system,

and is relying upon the much-advertised name of a very beginner, for the privilege of obtaining which he is paying a quite preposterous sum of money weekly to attract the public to see a very commonplace piece of work. The theatrical Columbus to whom we must look must never have heard of America, must know nothing whatever of theatrical management, must employ no professional readers of plays, or ever have entered a theatrical club. He must be a young man who has been educated at a public school and a university, a cricketer, a man who has attended racecourses, travelled, and have a wide circle of friends who go to the theatre and pay for their seats, and who do not know, or care to know, one actor from another. He must also be a playgoer, so that his motto may be "For playgoers by a playgoer," and not "For playgoers by a manager or an actor-manager." He will then certainly know what the public wants, because he will know what he wants himself, and he will also certainly make a reputation and a fortune. He will have no actor or actress on his list who receives a salary of more than thirty pounds a week, and for this reason his company will be made up of the best members of the younger school. He will have no single representative of the school of the highly paid people, of whom playgoers have become so tired.

MUSIC OF THE YEAR

THE musical year which began last October has now come to an end. One of its distinguishing features has been the high level of excellence which has been reached in every branch of musical art. At certain periods of the year there has been a temptation to pause and ask whether there be not too much catering for the musical appetite of the metropolis; but it would be well-nigh impossible to know where to start in reducing the number of concerts and other musical performances, for each one of them has borne the stamp either of promise or of accomplishment. In truth, there are far fewer concerts nowadays of the type that used to be so common some years ago, when a crowd of mediocre vocalists or violinists was thrust on to a concert platform by some unprincipled agent, to the advantage of nobody but the agent, who used to pocket a nice sum in fees. The unprincipled agent has, in fact, with one notorious exception, disappeared from our midst; and anything which conduces to maintain this state of affairs deserves all encouragement.

So many old favourites and so many newcomers have appeared on the concert platform during the past year that only a few of the most important performances can be mentioned within the limits of this article. Starting with orchestral concerts, it may be said that London has well maintained her reputation as the home of the finest orchestra in the world. The London Symphony Orchestra has, in fact, excelled itself this year, and when Dr. Richter has been in command its performances have been quite stupendous. Indeed, at the fourth Symphony concert Dr. Richter drew from them a rendering of the Meistersinger Overture which many people declared to have been the finest ever heard. The New Symphony Orchestra—a body collected and trained by Mr. Landon Ronald—has done very well and has steadily increased its reputation, while the Queen's Hall Orchestra, under Mr. Wood's able, if sometimes ponderous, guidance, and Mr. Beecham's responsive body of players have broken new ground in several directions.

Turning from ensemble to solo playing, a striking feature is the large number of fine pianists who have been heard in London during the last nine months. Though the king of them all, Paderewski, has not appeared here this year, several others in the front rank have visited London. Pachmann, the inimitable player of Chopin, flitted into our midst to prove that if one shuts one's eyes one can listen to him with greater enjoyment than almost any living pianist. Leopold Godowsky, in many ways the finest living pianist; Basil Sapellnikoff, Rosenthal, Bach-

haus, who is certainly not at his best in Chopin; Emil Sauer, brilliant but shallow; and Raoul Pugno, vigorous, but always perfectly refined—these are some of the old favourites who have been heard. Mark Hambourg, as usual, revealed all his old virtues and all his old vices. Thus on one occasion, having first murdered a Beethoven sonata and almost ruined the Brahms-Handel variations, he gave a couple of exquisite renderings of two Chopin pieces. If only there was less Hambourg and more of the different composers in his interpretations it would be a pleasure to listen to him; for he has well-nigh complete control over the keyboard. Three new pianists have also been heard this year—Ernest Schelling, brilliant and sincere, who has proved himself in equal sympathy with Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Ravel, Debussy, and Chopin; Louis Edger, who showed himself to be a really fine player of Bach and Beethoven; and, above all, Mr. Richard Buhlig, who played Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, and César Franck in a perfectly masterful way, sincerely, and without affectation—though his Debussy playing is rather lacking in delicacy.

Of living violinists, the two greatest, Ysaye and Kreisler, have been heard in London. Ysaye played the Brahms Violin Concerto for the first time here, and gave a really authoritative rendering, full of the warmth and vitality that distinguish his playing from that of almost all other violinists. Kreisler, as usual, was perfectly delightful, playing in that rather dreamy way that is so characteristic of him. Mischa Elman is such a consummate player that it is a pity that he should waste his own and his audience's time over such clap-trap as the Gounod-Wieniawski "Faust" fantasia, or Wilhelm's vile mutilation of Schubert's "Ave Maria." We are perfectly content to take his technique for granted; why not, then, put aside these mere fireworks? Eddy Brown, in spite of his youth and his offensively long hair, proved himself quite well equipped, both technically and emotionally; and M. Zacharewitsch showed that to a sound technique he adds insight and refinement.

So many vocalists have appeared that it is impossible to mention more than a very few. Miss Elena Gerhardt's vocal recitals have been wholly delightful, while those two refined and sympathetic singers, Messrs. Gervase Elwes and Campbell McInnes, have done excellent work in the right spirit. Madame Clara Butt, *vox et præterea nihil*, again proved that in the singing of maudlin or quasi-religious songs she is unbeatable; and Madame Melba showed great unwisdom in appearing upon the concert platform, where she is wholly out of place.

In the realm of chamber music much first-class work has been done. The Classical Concert Society, the French Concert Society, and several quartet-parties have been very busy. Among the latter special mention should be made of the New Quartet, a body of players led by Mr. Albert Sammons, who, in the course of two concerts, have jumped into the very front rank. Their playing of the Debussy quartet in G is one of the pleasantest memories of the year. Messrs. Ysaye and Pugno, Tovey and Casals, and Borwick and Henschel have also given great pleasure in different ways. A feature of the year has been the attention given to modern composers, English, French, and German; and there are signs that the public at large are waking up to the fact that English music is not in such a hopeless condition after all. Although Madame Lehmann's concert revealed little more than that she can easily hold her own as a composer of pseudo-melodious inanities, other composers have given concerts full of promise. A disquieting sign is, however, that the faded tinsel of Liszt seems just as popular as ever. He may have written half-a-dozen passable things, but his vile fantasia on the "Ruins of Athens," which has been heard twice this year, is certainly not one of them.

The Bach Choir, under Dr. Allen's inspiring guidance, have given two excellent concerts, at one of which there was an almost perfect rendering of the B minor Mass, the chorus preserving a wonderful purity of tone till the end. Finally, mention must be made of Miss Marie Brema's

revival of Gluck's "Orpheus" at the Savoy. With Miss Brema's skill and enthusiasm infecting all the company it was small wonder that a perfect performance was given, a performance full of conviction and beauty. It was a series of versatile triumphs for Miss Brema, Miss Viola Tree, and all concerned in the production. Altogether there has been plenty of first-class fare provided for the musical public, and there has always been plenty of variety in the fare. But several concerts have been far too long. No concert ought, unless under very exceptional circumstances, to last for more than two hours at the most.

LUCK AND AMULETS

I.—SUPERSTITION AND RELIGION.

FROM the *mganga* of West Africa, arrayed in all the horrid panoply of his dreadful calling, to the leather-clad chauffeur of a six-cylinder motor-car seems to the unobserving a very far cry. To find any similarity between them, except in their occasional reckless disregard of human life, would tax to the utmost the ingenuity of the wildest of false logicians. The doctrines of universal brotherhood, of humanitarianism, of socialism, and even of Christianity might all be advanced as reasons for the equal treatment of the respective acolytes of such widely different deities as a heathen idol and the civilised god "Speed." But even the most advanced student of these various schools of thought could hardly find any basic similarity between the two. If, however, one examines their distinctive actions, one cannot fail to notice that the dominating spirit in both is the one quality which has permeated every stage of civilisation and every phase of religious enlightenment from the Garden of Eden to the present day. For what fundamental difference can there in reality be between the medicine man who creates a fetish against disease from an old glass bottle and the mechanician who insures against disaster by affixing a "Teddy bear" to the bonnet of his palpitating road-hog?

The efficacy of either is no doubt open to the gravest possible suspicion, but superstition is so integral a part of human nature that the only result of an accident in either case is that the wearer discards his useless deity in favour of one that he finds thoroughly satisfactory—until the next mishap. The secret of the belief in amulets or charms really lies on the reverse side of the medal, in the fear of nearly all uneducated or semi-educated persons of *βασκανία* or the Evil Eye. It is to guard themselves against evil influences that people normally wear charms, for simple folk agree with modern Christian Scientists that physical mishap is but the natural consequence of a mind diseased.

The prevalence of this superstition may be traced in the history of every nation that has left a history behind it. Among the Hebrews, although the use of amulets was expressly and categorically forbidden by the Mosaic Law, we find the use of phylacteries not only sanctioned, but encouraged by the priestly tribe of Levi. The pentagram of the Pythagoreans, the magic sign that is supposed to stop the progress of the Devil, has been handed down through generations as one of the signs of the great body of Freemasons. One of the favourite Egyptian amulets—a fish—became by adoption a charm among early Christians for the reason that *ἰχθὺς* spelt the initial letters of *Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ υἱὸς σωτήρ*. Coming to more modern times, the sale of pieces of the True Cross, of handkerchiefs of Saint Veronica, and of other similar saintly relics formed no small part of the income of many mendicant friars, while in the more irreligious nineteenth century, bog-oak pigs, billikens, and black cats all do their best to keep their lucky owners from harm.

Curiously enough, what is perhaps the best known "luck" in England has nothing to do with magical efficacy, but is the outcome of practical efficiency. On service in India, the British cavalry habitually wear steel-chain

shoulder-straps, termed "lucks," not from any supernatural power of safeguarding their wearers from ill-fortune, but after their inventor, General Luck, Inspector-General of Cavalry, who found them an excellent practical preventive against sword-cuts! But these things are all of general and somewhat vague interest. In spite, however, of the gross materialism of modern times, there are in England many historical possessions which are deemed to confer luck, good or bad as the case may be, upon their owners, and a belief in the efficacy of which is just as much part of their religion as a belief in one Supreme Power. Of these the most famous is undoubtedly "The Luck of Eden Hall."

DRESSING UP

"DOWDYISM," it has been said, is but an expression of imperfect vitality, while the highest fashion is intensely "pim pant" and alive, with its blood tingling, as it were, in all its extremities. It is perhaps to be deduced from this that all outer extravagances of dress correspond to certain vitalities, abnormalities, or peculiarities in the dresser. Martial even seems to think that one ought to cut one's coat according to one's conscience, as he puts it on record that he dislikes those who wear sober-tinted clothes and "pale-green morals." For everyday conventional dress the limits within which the artist works have insensibly narrowed since 1830, and the black coat, deemed so significant a sign of the times by de Musset, has everywhere replaced the gayer clothing, the strong blues and clarets and yellows of a less material era; so that men are now what Pepys once talked of being, "a Quaker or some such melancholy thing." The consequence is that to-day any eccentricity of costume is cruelly marked. That the connection between the external and inner man is not imaginary is shown by the almost universal wish for outer suitability. Pepys, who loved to talk, could not relish or shine in a conversation when he thought himself unsuitably dressed. The Chinese have a saying that it is a personal calamity to have inappropriate clothing, and only the man of very superior understanding is not "ashamed in a robe quilted with hemp." Perhaps Dean Stanley's splendid indifference to the loss of the most essential collar-stud when he was dining out may be accounted for by his superiority.

It is useless for the Stoic to pronounce that raiment is but tags of hair, purple but the blood of a shell-fish; there remains a curious congruity between the dress and the dresser, as between the style and the man. Just as the fop Brummell was marked by the severest simplicity in dress, the un-ideal perfection of conventional man, the Romanticism in Richard Wagner feels its way to velvet and unusual headgear; and, in the days when temperament was more happily expressed in the accessories of life, Lord Lytton dressed to write, and wrote to the accompaniment of twelve candles burning and two powdered footmen in attendance. Balzac's ample writing-robe of white cashmere or white flannel, drawn in round the waist by a girdle, perhaps symbolised for him the cloistral life to which his pen (at times) condemned him; a Benedictine of fiction, he assumed the Benedictine garb. Lord Macaulay, that magnificent *brodeur* of history, used, says his biographer, though without other personal fopperies, to regard his embroidered waistcoats with complacency. As Hamlet wore a suit of sable, so did Lord Petersham affect brown, his carriages and horses being of that colour, while his servants wore long brown coats; his devotion to this colour being caused by his having been desperately in love with a very beautiful widow, bearing the name of Brown. It is difficult to see why the once-celebrated Colonel Mellish, a recklessly extravagant sporting character, wore a dress that was somewhat peculiar for its lightness of hue (being on the side of the angels)—white hat, white trousers, and white silk stockings—there being nothing black about him but his hair and his moustaches, "which to him were an ornament."

Nothing in Colonel Mellish's life seems to warrant his being on the side of the angels, and one is equally puzzled to discover why Beau Nash wore a white hat when he was called King of Bath. It was a singularity in those days. He said he wore it that it might not be stolen, but that is manifestly not his real reason.

Burns, like most Scotsmen, liked to make a conspicuous figure. When a married man, the father of a family, a poor and unsuccessful farmer, and an officer of the excise, we find him out fishing in a mummer's costume, with fox-skin cap, belted greatcoat, and a great Highland broadsword girded about him. A broadsword is not very useful to Piscator, though it might be employed to cut off the heads of little fishes; but the fact was he loved dressing up for its own sake as sincerely as Goldsmith, who gave as one of the sufficient reasons why he did not like to enter the Church that he was so fond of coloured clothes.

This is the spirit that led, and that leads in a lesser degree still, to the extravagant and symbolical dress of the Latin Quarter students and the proverbial velvet of the English landscape painter. Where no other eccentricity in clothes is indulged in in that delectable quarter of Paris, the hair is unusually treated and trained, probably because it requires less initial outlay than a specially designed suit, and the effect is reminiscent of the felt hats, the flowing hair, and unshorn faces, the vagaries in velvet and rainbow costumes of the sacred band of Romanticism. But what a falling off from the days when Gautier wore at a famous first night a pair of light green trousers with black velvet stripes, a coat with immense velvet facings, and an overcoat lined with grey satin. But all these were eclipsed by one item—the most phosphoric, phantasmagoric and meteoric (the adjectives are Gautier's own)—one waistcoat cut from a sheet of fiery scarlet satin in the form of a pourpoint. What does all this mean but the famous author's use and abuse of local colour? A red waistcoat with rich gold lace appeared meteor-like at another first night, when Doctor Johnson watched his dull play "Irene," and he was wont to say that he could not treat people with the same ease as when in his usual plain clothes. The singularity, however, of the two red waistcoats seems to establish a connection between that coloured garment and the joys and terrors of a first night, and thus incidentally, as we have said before, between the exterior and interior man.

DOG-DAYS

THE early Egyptians typified the constellation in which the brilliant Sirius burns as a watch-dog, because it warned them by its rising of the imminent overflow of the Nile; but other nations, while retaining the name of the star and its emblem, lost sight of the original significance, and assigned the summer's climax of heat, during the period from July 3 to August 11, to the supposition that Sirius then rose and set with the sun. His forces, united to those of our own source of warmth and light, were in the popular opinion irresistible; the Romans considered them harmful, for they looked upon the dog-days as unfortunate and prejudicial to life, coming at the most unhealthy time of the year. Ancient authors say that "the day this star first rises in the morning the sea boils, wine turns sour, dogs begin to grow mad, the bile increases and irritates, and all animals grow languid; also the diseases it usually occasions in men are burning fevers, hysterics, and phrensies."

We have outgrown any fear of that formidable list of ills, happily, and the scientists told us long ago that the increasing temperature sometimes felt when the sun's altitude is actually declining is merely due to the accumulated heat of spring and summer—just as, conversely, the coldest weather comes in January and February, when the

sun is climbing higher day by day. The once prevalent idea that dogs go mad at this season has also been severely shaken. A hundred years ago an edict was issued in Cambridge to the effect that all persons keeping dogs must either muzzle them or tie them up, and "many a dog was tied up by the neck as a sacrifice," writes a chronicler of the time. In a "History of the Year," published in 1825, occurs an article strongly protesting against the practice of keeping dogs in towns, and recommending that every dog should be killed. "Against this," says the writer, "a cry will go forth from all dog-owners; they will condemn the measure as proceeding from a barbarian; but they are the barbarians who keep animals subject to a disease fatal to human life. Such persons, so far from being entitled to a voice against its execution, merit abhorrence and contempt for daring to propose that every man, woman, and child among their friends and neighbours should run the risk of a cruel death for the gratification of selfishness. No means of preventing hydrophobia exists but the destruction of dogs."

This sounds rather sweeping, and in the light of our later knowledge absurd. But how was that later knowledge gained? The question cannot be answered without bringing in the name of Louis Pasteur—a name to be remembered with reverence and honour. Not so very long ago, as the above quotation suggests, the bite of a furious dog brought with it an awful horror—the spectre of hydrophobia. The disease was more frequent on the Continent than in England, where our frontier of ocean saved us in this matter, as in others, considerable trouble; but it was known here, and dreaded. Then Pasteur, indefatigable worker, lover of human kind—and especially of children—after decades of splendid labour and research in other fields, began to investigate the cause of this fearful infection which a mad dog could pass on to man.

For five years—from 1880 to 1885—he experimented, piled record on record and proof on proof; but his first case arrived before he was quite ready to assert definitely that his inoculations would prevent the disease if used in time. Into his laboratory, one summer day in 1885, came a mother with her little boy, who had been bitten repeatedly by an enraged dog. The poor little fellow had either to be left to his fate, or the treatment which so far had only been tried on animals must be tried on him. It was a decision to give pause to the cleverest physician; if failure resulted, what taunts, what ridicule! But Pasteur consulted with his assistant doctors, and, backed up by their advice, inoculated the boy. With intense anxiety, day after day, he watched and waited, wearing himself out with the strain; and it might be said that the medical world waited with him, some ready to praise, some to blame. The boy, with his fourteen wounds, recovered completely, and from that day Pasteur was recognised as one of the leading physicians of history. He had long been known to the great English savants; Lord Lister, at the reception in the theatre of the Sorbonne on the occasion of Pasteur's seventieth birthday, said: "You have raised the veil which for centuries had covered infectious diseases." Professor Tyndall, years before, wrote: "For the first time in the history of science we have the right to cherish the sure and certain hope that, as regards epidemic diseases, medicine will soon be delivered from quackery and placed on a real scientific basis; to you will be due the largest share of gratitude." And Huxley once said that "Pasteur's discoveries alone would suffice to cover the war indemnity of £200,000,000 paid by France to Germany in 1871."

So were the hot Southern summers robbed of their greatest terror, and so, by patient, plodding research, the gentle physician of France became great and beloved; and it will not be amiss, while we gather holiday programmes and steamer-lists about us during the "dog-days," to pay a tribute of honour to the name of Louis Pasteur.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE LITERARY TASTE OF OXFORD.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—I wondered when writing the article entitled "The Literary Taste of Oxford" whether I had made it sufficiently pointed to pierce the pachydermatousness of the undergraduate. I find, to my delight, that I have succeeded; to such an extent, moreover, that Messrs. New and Oriel—both undoubtedly men of brain and energy, pillars of their respective Colleges—decline to believe that I also am a son of Alma Mater. I should like modestly to point out, in order to dispel these clouds of disbelief, that besides being with my College boat at Henley, I also represented my University against Cambridge, and have had the infinite pride and pleasure (which will be known, I hope, one day to Messrs. New and Oriel as well) of seeing my name in the lists of Old Blues as a "previous winner."

I am grateful indeed to Messrs. New and Oriel, whom I decline to consider as opponents, for the lucid manner in which they make clear that the degree of Doctor of Letters "has nothing whatever to do with the English Literature School or any other." At the end of this able and extremely well-written paragraph, however, Messrs. New and Oriel seem to illustrate the advantages of that most useful and convenient game which is known as "hedging." "English Literature," they say, "is only one among the many possible fields of research" in which a man may proceed to the degree of Doctor of Letters. It is a pity that the first masterly paragraph, teeming with facts and well-rounded statements, should come to so ingenuous a conclusion.

"We wish," continue Messrs. New and Oriel, with real feeling, "that we could have taken your contributor to a meeting of a literary club which we once attended." I should have been highly flattered at receiving an invitation. I have attended some hundreds of such meetings, and found the mulled claret and cakes most succulent and inviting. Messrs. New and Oriel apparently found this Congreve party a very dull affair, for they only attended once. I can sympathise with them, for I found these so-called literary clubs to be merely excuses for a small body of men to forgoth and discuss various wines, cakes, and tobaccos, and incidentally to ease themselves of that terrible disease so common at Oxford, the *cacoethes loquendi*. Congreve is but the ladder to the pantry-shelf.

Why Messrs. New and Oriel, each of whom is a member of a Junior Common Room, and each of whom doubtless had a great deal to say at "the meeting of the undergraduates which decides what periodicals shall be taken," why these two should go to the Union to read the current literature is a question which strikes me as peculiarly paradoxical. To order certain papers for one's J. C. R., and then to wait three whole days for the pleasure of reading a thumb-marked copy at the Union is almost Gilbertian. I am surprised that two such obviously earnest men as Messrs. New and Oriel should succumb to this weakness, the more so as the price of THE ACADEMY is not by any means prohibitive, even to the undergraduate purse whose strings do sometimes relax for the purchase of certain kinds of literature. Obviously, however, they do not consider THE ACADEMY to be worth buying—an opinion which I do not share.

THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—I imagine that the sting of the article is intended to be the remark that "the present-day conscience feels no prick at the accusation of being completely dead to literary taste." It is the one pleasant sentence of the article. A conscience can feel no prick at an accusation which is ridiculously false. Further, may I protest against your comment, "this is one view"? If it is a view, it is the view of a man whose eyes are shut, and such sightless sights are not what one expects in a "serious-minded, literary publication." I write as a layman. I have had neither the experience nor the practice necessary to make me an efficient "literary man." But I have a real love of, and interest in, literature, and have been living as a resident undergraduate in Oxford for the last two years.

The writer of the above article says that "the modern undergraduate is not and does not want to be a literary man." In support of this assertion he draws a picture of the ordinary non-reading man, in which every detail appears to me to be stale and obvious. There are plenty of such men in modern Oxford, as there have been plenty in the "brave old days," and as there are and have been plenty in the outside world. But does your contributor honestly imagine that there are no others? Or does he merely say so in order to set in motion a discussion? If the latter, I fear I have risen to his fly very nicely; but be that as it may, I cannot now think of a single

college in Oxford that does not possess a literary society or club, and may have two or three; nearly all of these are well attended by enthusiasts. In my own college there are two literary clubs and a dramatic club. One of the two literary clubs provides for the younger members of the college, the other is for the more experienced, and practises a stern exclusiveness when considering the literary merits of candidates. Occasionally these clubs are fortunate enough to hear papers from distinguished men. One of the last I heard was from Professor Walter Raleigh. As a rule, the papers are by undergraduates, members of the clubs, and many of them are hardly less interesting than Professor Raleigh's. There are a few matters for which I should like to crave a little more space.

First, I hope your readers will not hastily condemn socks and straight-grained pipes. For those who can afford such things, and have youth and taste, the cultivation of a decent appearance is a thing to be commended. The undergraduate who slops about in filthy grey "bags" and a filthier Norfolk coat is a revolting sight, and, I devoutly hope, doomed to insignificance. As for novel-reading, undergraduates—like mortals in the outside world—read what they like; and some choose poor books and some good books. But I can assure young men who want to go to Oxford, but are put off by terrors of being called "pi" when they read Smollett (!), that their fears are groundless.

Finally, the poor abused stage. What applies to London society applies to Oxford society, and, of course, it is the rich man who supports the theatre in Oxford, demanding plenty of musical comedy no less than he does in London. But a glance at the New Theatre programme will show that there is a demand for good plays; crowded houses always receive Martin Harvey, H. B. Irving, and F. R. Benson. There is a section of undergraduates which flocks to see Ibsen, Shaw, and Galsworthy. And let not your contributor forget the Oxford University Dramatic Society or the Oxford Drama Society.

One absolutely final word. The danger to literary taste in Oxford is imaginary. But there are real dangers. One is, that Shaw and Galsworthy receive too much support, to the great hurt of Shakespeare, Sheridan, and all true drama. To put it differently, there is a growing tendency in the direction of Socialism, and that "Realism" which is so repulsively false. The young Balliol scholar appears to think that it is impossible to be clever without being a Socialist. Hence the present deplorable state of the Union. But the vast majority of decent undergraduates are not Socialists, and Oxford is still at heart Conservative, and loyal to the true ideas of beauty in literature and drama. I feel sure that it will have the support of your paper. In the meantime, if your contributor wants to start a discussion, let it not be on a non-existent danger; let it rather inquire why there is this favour—among a minority at present, thank Heaven!—for such monstrosities as Galsworthy's "Justice" and Lloyd George's "Budget."—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
PHILOKALOS.

THE BEECHAM OPERA SEASON.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—I see that you speak in THE ACADEMY of Mr. Walter Hyde's fine performance in "Tales of Hoffmann." Perhaps you can find space to correct this little mistake, as Walter Hyde did not sing the rôle this season. The name should be John Bardsley.
BASIL TOZER.

BOOKS RECEIVED

MISCELLANEOUS

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